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[0026] Next, a modification example of the first embodiment of the present invention will now be described. In the modification of the first embodiment of the present invention, a information provision method is implemented which classifies word-of-mouth information depending on the kind of subject to which the word-of-mouth information is registered, can display only the number of a specific kind of word-of-mouth information cases in response to an input from the user, and particularly when the kinds of word-of-mouth information desired by the user are limited, the user can more easily select and use the desired word-of-mouth information. The classifications of word-of-mouth information are, for example, the word-of-mouth information relating to a meal, the word-of-mouth information relating to shopping, the word-of-mouth information relating to facilities, the word-of-mouth information relating to sightseeing, or the word-of-mouth information relating to the neighborhood. The present method is different from the first embodiment, as it has a process of performing a classification in the server depending on the kind of word-of-mouth information, and as it performs an operation of designating a type of word-of-mouth information when the user registers the word-of-mouth information and performs an operation of designating a type of word-of-mouth information when the user uses the word-of-mouth information.

[0027] FIG. 12 is an example of a display screen of the terminal device 180 in the modification of first embodiment. The display screen 1210 is similar to the display screen 420 in the point of displaying the number of all the word-of-mouth information cases, but is different in the point of displaying buttons (word-of-mouth information classification button) 1201, 1202, 1203, 1204, 1205, and 1206 that indicate classification of the kinds of the word-of-mouth information on the screen, and of displaying the classification of the kind of word-of-mouth information that is currently displayed on the screen and the numeral 1230. When the user chooses one of the word-of-mouth information classification buttons in the display screen 1210, within the currently displayed area of the map information, only the number of the word-of-mouth information cases related to the selected classification are displayed. FIG. 12 illustrates an example that the user selects the button 1201

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indicating the meal out of the word-of-mouth information classification buttons, and thereby a display screen 1220 is being displayed. In the display screen 1220, only the number of the word-of-mouth information cases related to a meal which are registered within the displayed map information, and then the classification of word-of-mouth information and the number of the word-of-mouth information 1240 will be the meal information and the number of the meal information. Moreover, if the user specifies the area as in first embodiment, corresponding the number of the word-of-mouth information cases on more detailed map information is displayed. When the user selects one of the word-of-mouth information classification buttons 1202, 1203, 1204, 1205, or 1206 in the screen 1220, it is turned to the screen on which the number of the word-of-mouth information cases corresponding to the selected button are displayed.

[0028] FIG. 13 illustrates a process flow of the server in the modification of first embodiment at which the server is requested by the user to register the word-of-mouth information. In the modification of first embodiment, the classification information of word-of-mouth information is taken into the data that is handled at which the information is requested by the user. Here, the classification information refers to the information of what word-of-mouth information classification button is selected by the user. The difference from the first embodiment is in the points of receiving the classification information when receiving a request from the user in addition to the requested position and map information (step 1301) and of taking the classification information into the consideration when calculating the number of the word-of-mouth information cases (step 1302). Moreover, the difference from the first embodiment is in the processing procedure of the server when the user selects one of the word-of-mouth information selection buttons 1201, 1202, 1203, 1204, 1205, or 1206 from the word-of-mouth information cases in the selection screen 1210. The selection result from the terminal device is received, and whether the user has selected the word-of-mouth information classification button is determined (step 1303). When selected, after obtaining the map information from the map information DB according to the desired position information (step 1304), the number of the word-of-mouth information is calculated based on the classification information and position information. Subsequently, it returns to step 905, and the map information and the number of the word-of-mouth information cases are linked. When the user does not select a word-of-mouth information classification button in

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step 1303, similar processes as in the first embodiment are performed.

[0029]   FIG. 14 illustrates a process flow of the terminal device of word-of-mouth information utilization time in the modification of the first embodiment. Differences from the first embodiment are in step 1401 and step 1402. Whether a word-of-mouth information classification button is selected by the user in the suggested word-of-mouth information cases in step 1006 (step 1401), and when selected, the selected result is transmitted to the server 110 (step 1402). The information of the number of the word-of-mouth information cases obtained from the server 110 as a result is only the number of the word-of-mouth information cases applicable to the word-of-mouth information classification button that is selected by the user. When a word-of-mouth information classification button is not selected, similar processes as in the first embodiment are performed.

[0030]   FIG. 15 shows a data configuration example that is stored in a word-of-mouth information DB 230 in the modification of the first embodiment. Data 1500 is configured by the addition of classification 1501 other than data configuration 1100. The classification 1501 indicates the kind of word-of-mouth information, and is selected from, for example, a meal, shopping, facilities, sightseeing, recommendation, etc. corresponding to the information selection buttons 1201, 1202, 1203, 1204, 1205, and 1206. The data 1500 is an example of the data configuration stored in word-of-mouth information DB 230, and its configuration is not limited.

[0031]   As described in the above, according to the modification of the first embodiment, by classifying the word-of-mouth information depending on the kind of information and providing the user with the number of the word-of-mouth information cases for each classification in addition to first embodiment, the user can more easily select and use the desired word-of-mouth information when the kinds of desired word-of-mouth information are limited.

[0040]   Next, a third embodiment according to the present invention will now be described.

[0041]   In the third embodiment of the present invention, a point is given to the

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user every time the user registers the word-of-mouth information into the server, and according to the number of points, privileges such as varying the number of word-of-mouth information cases are given. By doing so, it is possible to promote the word-of-mouth information registration by the user.

[0042] FIG. 19 illustrates a server configuration in the third embodiment. The server 1910 is different from the server 110 in the point of having user information DB 1920. In user information DB 1920, an ID number of the user, the number of points, a level, or the like are stored, and the number of points and the level which vary depending on the number of the word-of-mouth information registered by the user are managed. The level relates to a classification according to the number of points gained by the user. For example, if the user registers one piece of word-of-mouth information, one point is gained, and the level goes up by one for every 10 points. It is classified to level A when point P is $0<=P<10$, and it is classified to level B when point P is $10<=P<20$. Further, it is classified to level C when point P is $20<=P<30$. When the level goes up, a privilege such as increasing the number of available word-of-mouth information cases is given, and whereby the present word-of-mouth informational provision service becomes more useful.

[0043] FIG. 20 is an example of a display screen in the terminal device 180. The portion on which the number of the word-of-mouth information is displayed is the same as the display screen 420, but a membership information display unit 2010 is different. On this portion, a name, a point, and a level are displayed depending on the user who uses the service. In the example of FIG. 20, it can be seen that the user name of who is currently using the word-of-mouth information provision service is KIKUCHI, the point is 15, and the level is B. As a privilege for each level, for example, the number of the word-of-mouth information cases for each facility increases every time the level goes up. In level A, the number of the word-of-mouth information cases available for a single facility is one, and only the lastly registered word-of-mouth information in the word-of-mouth information registered to the facility can be used. If it reaches level B by repeating the registration of the word-of-mouth information, the number of the word-of-mouth information cases available for a single facility becomes three, and the lastly registered three pieces of word-of-mouth information in the word-of-mouth information registered to the facility can be used. If it reaches level C by further repeating the registration of the word-of-mouth information, the number of the

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word-of-mouth information cases available for a single facility becomes five, and the lastly registered five pieces of word-of-mouth information in the word-of-mouth information registered to the facility can be used. This is only an example of a privilege depending on the number of points, is not for limiting the privilege.

[0044] FIG. 21 is a data configuration example handled in the user information DB 1920. The data 2100 includes the user ID number 2101, the user name 2102, the user point 2103, and the user level 2104. The data 2110 is an example data of KIKUCHI.

[0045] As described in the above, according to the third embodiment, the registration of the word-of-mouth information by the user who uses the word-of-mouth information provision service is promoted, the number of the word-of-mouth information registered to the server in the word-of-mouth information provision service is increased, and thereby the service can be more useful.

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